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## HISTORICAL PAPERS

RELATING TO THE

**HENRY WHITFIELD HOUSE**

GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT



## ERRATA

Page 5, lines 1, 2—Omit words "in two different pamphlets."  
Page 11, line 2 from bottom—For "was" read "were."  
Page 21, line 30—For "became" read "because."  
Page 36, line 18—For "1591" read "1597."

## ADDENDUM

Page 59, below lists of trustees insert—"Curators, Mr. and Mrs. Harry  
F. Griswold."



VIEW OF OLD FIREPLACE AND NORTH END OF LARGE ROOM.

Portrait of Nathaniel Griffing, owner of Whitfield House 1800-1845.

# HISTORICAL PAPERS

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## HENRY WHITFIELD HOUSE

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Reprinted by Vote of the Trustees

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## INTRODUCTORY.

The following papers have been printed before in two different pamphlets and are here reproduced together on account of their common historical character. A smaller pamphlet, "The Henry Whitfield House," of which a second edition was issued about two years ago, covers part of the same ground and gives a few additional details.

The first and longest article is taken by the kind permission of the New Haven Colony Historical Society from the seventh volume of the Society's "Papers," though somewhat abbreviated. The other four come from the "Proceedings at the Formal Opening of the State Historical Museum, 1904." Much interesting matter in the last-named pamphlet is omitted, as relating rather to the "Opening" than to the story of the House.

The manuscripts followed in printing were furnished by the various writers, who are alone responsible for their historical accuracy. The ground plan and perpendicular section of the original fireplace were kindly sent by the architect who designed the exhibition-room, Mr. Norman M. Isham of Providence. Attention is called to the note following Mrs. Cheney's paper, which contains additional information of much interest concerning Whitfield. It may be noticed that as the State Historical Museum is in the Henry Whitfield House, the former name is sometimes used to designate the building.

It seems worth while to add a brief account of the view showing approximately the "supposed appearance of the exterior" of the House when the Whitfields lived in it, since this view is referred to in the first paper as possessing a kind of authority. We are indebted for this cut to Mr. Charles H. Scholey of the Guilford *Shore Line Times*. It is based on a drawing made by the late Myron B. Benton of Amenia, N. Y., in 1862. This drawing appeared as a steel engraving (with a short article from Mr. Benton's pen), in the *Ladies Repository* for June, 1863. The engraving was photographed, and from the photograph in 1890 a picture was made on a tile by the late Miss Harriet Day

Andrews of Hartford. Her object was, first, to show the stone structure substantially as it was in 1862 when Mr. Benton drew it. To this end two modern additions of wood (one a mere shed) were omitted, and a door and a window, concealed by the smaller addition, were introduced. The position of these was obtained from plans prepared, it would seem, about 1859 (at least three years before Mr. Benton's visit), by Hon. Ralph D. Smith for Palfrey's *History of New England* and afterwards inserted in Mr. Smith's *History of Guilford*. There can be no reasonable doubt that the representation is accurate to this point. But with the object of reproducing still more nearly the appearance of the House as it was when Mr. Whitfield left it, the window first mentioned and a smaller one were drawn with diamond panes, such as persons living in the middle of the last century could remember. The old windows, however, according to our architect, were much smaller than those remaining in Mr. Smith's day, though possibly the two seen close to the eaves and since removed are original. Furthermore, the stucco on the outer walls, first put there, probably, not far from 1820 and renewed in 1868, and which it is not quite clear whether Mr. Benton intended to show, is frankly omitted on the tile. Thus the far more picturesque surface of seventeenth century colonial masonry, built up of "rather small flat stones," principally quarried, one fancies, by the frost, is at least indicated. Mr. Benton's own enjoyment of picturesque effects is shown in his rejection of "the ordinary point of view" from the street. His taste went far to save from oblivion the very striking east chimney then destined soon to disappear.

W. G. A.

## THE HENRY WHITFIELD HOUSE AND THE STATE HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

By REV. WILLIAM G. ANDREWS, D.D.

(Read before the New Haven Colony Historical Society, December 19,  
1904, and here abbreviated.)

Rather more than a year ago a mass of blackened stonework was brought to light in Guilford which I suppose nobody had seen for more, perhaps much more, than a hundred years. It is, in the opinion of the architect and archaeologist who superintended what we may call the excavation, "the oldest fireplace in New England,"\* and opens into the north chimney of the Henry Whitfield house. In front of it and effectually concealing it were two other fireplaces; one had been in existence for a generation, and one, or its ruins, for no one knows how long, certainly since the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Now how do we *know* that what we call the Whitfield house is really that which Henry Whitfield lived in? How do we *know* that his house, whether this one or another, was built in 1640, or before? How do we *know* that some other settler, somewhere else, did not, as he easily might, build a house, part or even the whole of which still stands, years before this can have been built, so that our priceless fireplace is perhaps not the oldest in New England?

As to the question of identity, that is soon disposed of. There are, in the first place, deeds and wills running back from 1900 to 1659, when Whitfield's son, Nathaniel, sold what had been his father's New England residence, and alone proving the identity of that with the "old stone house" of Guilford: But we have also the testimony of Rev. Thomas Ruggles, junior, a native of Guilford, and an industrious questioner of children and grandchildren of the settlers, given while the property still

\* This opinion, it will be observed, relates only to the fireplace with, I suppose, the greater part of the chimney. Houses are often older than their present chimneys.

belonged to the family which bought it of the Whitfields (1769), that Whitfield's house was then standing. And we have the testimony of the Massachusetts Historical Society, given when the property had passed to the owner whose descendants held it until 1900, that the same house had meanwhile been "handsomely repaired."\* The identity is beyond question, even if it only extends to the fireplace and part of the chimney.

But when, precisely, did Henry Whitfield build the house, or, at any rate, the chimney? It needs no contemporaneous documents, testifying explicitly to the date of erection, to prove that the date is earlier than 1650, when, as such documents prove, Mr. Whitfield left Guilford finally. It needs no contemporaneous papers to prove that he built his house, like other settlers, as soon as possible after the town was settled, and documents amply prove that Guilford was settled in 1639, and that the settlers, with Henry Whitfield at their head, had begun to occupy the lands in some way "as planters" before September twenty-ninth of that year, when the formal transfer was made by the Indians. They had probably already built some temporary houses or cabins to shelter them during the winter, and those who could do so must have completed more permanent houses in the course of the next year. Mr. Whitfield, the richest of the planters, with a wife and eight or nine children, had no doubt substantially finished his stone house in 1640, though we are assured that it could not have been finished in 1639. But since it was intended, according to Mr. Ruggles, that is according to the children and grandchildren of the settlers, to serve as a fort, and such a defense of the settlement would be secured as early as it could be, it is hard not to believe that it was begun in 1639, and so far finished that it could be used as a place of refuge in case of attack, and could be made a comfortable abode for Mr. Whitfield and one of his sons, or some friends, until spring. And during the recent changes already referred to a break was found in the west or front wall of the cellar which suggested to the architect that two parts of that wall had perhaps been built at two different times. And on the east side of the house a vertical joint, discovered where the north

\* Ruggles' "History of Guilford," *Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society*. 1st series, vols. iv and x.

wall of the wing or ell met the wall of the front part near the north end of the house, and signs of plaster on the latter behind the end of the other wall, suggested that the ell was built later than the front part. On these grounds the architect thinks it "somewhat" likely that the house was at first a single room. It might have been a square structure with the south end filled in with timbers, while the great north fireplace made it habitable. We cannot affirm positively that this fireplace and the adjoining walls date from 1639, but several facts point that way and create a strong probability that that is the true date. That the house, as a whole, was finished in 1640 is fairly well proved.

But is the Whitfield house the oldest in New England, or as has often been affirmed, in the United States? It seems impossible to be sure that it is, unless one can know the age of all the oldest houses in the country (leaving out of consideration the much earlier Spanish settlements), and that, I fear, we can never know. A very partial inquiry gives, however, a result interesting as far as it goes. In Virginia no dwelling house now standing is known to have been built before 1654. In Rhode Island one house is variously assigned to 1640 and 1639, making it as old as ours. But good authorities think this assignment less than probable; that house is "possibly" as old. In Massachusetts there are, or were not long ago, about a dozen houses for which a date earlier than 1640 is claimed, and there is an antecedent probability that such claims can rightfully be made in territory settled nearly twenty years before Guilford. And yet it does not appear that any one of these dates has been so conclusively established as to be accepted by local historical students as a body. That is, it seems that the precise dates depend on tradition only. At least that is the only inference which I can draw from what I have learned about the matter. It remains entirely possible, if not probable, that Massachusetts does now contain dwellings older than the Whitfield house;\* it is possible that there are such in Virginia, settled in 1607. But it seems fair to say that in the three States mentioned there are none for which a date as early has been so nearly proved. I believe that as much could have been said if

\* Our architect thinks that the Roger Williams House in Salem is older.

the inquiry had been extended to other States of English origin as long settled as Connecticut.

Before dealing with the question as to the probable appearance of the house in Whitfield's time, it is better to say something of the changes known or believed to have been made during the long interval, now approaching two centuries and three-quarters, with a brief mention of the owners who made them. The story of the successive owners is an interesting one and enriches the house itself with some memorable associations, but I can give little more than names and dates.

Mr. Whitfield died in England, in 1657, leaving his Guilford property to his wife, Dorothy Sheaffe. When their son, Nathaniel, sold it for his mother two years later (1659), the purchaser was Major Robert Thompson, a Puritan merchant of London, who had become also a landowner, and who is to-day represented by his descendant, Sir Francis Astley-Corbett, owner of Major Thompson's country house, Elsham Hall, in Lincolnshire. Four descendants in the male line, all living in England, held the property until 1772, when another Robert Thompson sold it to Wyllys Eliot of Guilford, a fictitious lawsuit in New Haven being necessary to break the entail. The house itself belonged to Mr. Eliot (of the family of the famous apostle to the Indians, still represented in Guilford and elsewhere) less than a fortnight, and was sold in November, 1772, to Joseph Pynchon, the solitary owner, after Whitfield, who ever lived in it; it is, therefore, a "Pynchon House" by a much better title than the "House of the Seven Gables." In 1776, Mr. Pynchon sold it to Jasper Griffing of Guilford, with whose descendants it remained until the sale to the State of Connecticut in 1900. The last individual owner, Mrs. Sarah Brown Cone of Stockbridge, descends from a first cousin of Mrs. Whitfield's, Joanna Sheaffe, the wife of William Chittenden, and therefore shares the blood of the first mistress and second owner.\*

In indicating the changes which have made the house what it is, I follow a guide to whom I have already referred, the architect who planned and carefully watched the latest changes, whom I may now introduce as Mr. Norman M. Isham

\* Mrs. Cone died Nov. 9, 1909.

of Providence, and to whom my obligations are greater than I can easily tell you. In a book on "Early Connecticut Houses," of which he was one of the authors, and which some of you probably know, he assigns by conjecture to one of the Thompsons, near the beginning of the eighteenth century, the division by a floor and partitions of a long, high hall, of which tradition makes the whole front part of the house to have consisted originally, and which Mr. Isham is strongly inclined to believe in. It is likely to have been divided very early by a floor, and just such a change had been made in a multitude of such halls in England in the sixteenth century. This change may have been Major Thompson's own contribution to the convenience and comfort of his American tenants. Another Thompson very likely removed in the eighteenth century a chimney which there is good reason to believe stood in the beginning at the south end of the hall but which did not exist forty years ago. This removal was made, doubtless, to render it possible to put windows into the south upper room and perhaps the attic, but the south wall was weakened by doing it. Almost certainly after Jasper Griffing became owner repairs were made which may have included the building of a second fireplace at the north end, in front of the old one. Early in the nineteenth century the outer wall was plastered. Finally, in 1868, during the ownership of Mrs. Cone's mother, Mrs. Chittenden, when the house had become uninhabitable, and at least the south wall was insecure, it was largely rebuilt. This was done to save it, and those most concerned earnestly desired to preserve everything that was capable of preservation. The extent of the changes, however, has been variously stated and there has long been a strong desire to know positively how much of the old work was left, a desire which it was hoped that the late changes would to some extent gratify. The latest fireplace in the north chimney was now introduced and the south chimney was restored. A sad loss, apparently inevitable, was that of the old roof, the curious construction of which, as far as can be inferred, might have been intended to provide gables in front, containing windows for the original garret, otherwise quite in darkness.

The observations made by Mr. Isham, in 1903, was limited by the object then in view. This was not to solve problems,

but to provide a convenient room for the principal collections of the Museum, of course without injury to what was most precious of them all, the remnants of the original house. Less was learned than had been hoped, therefore, about the building as it was at first and about the portion which remained after 1868.

The most interesting results concerned the fireplace and chimney, which, if I understand my guide, were probably unique in New England in virtue of two or three features which have survived on the other side of the Atlantic. One of them is shown in plans of Shakespeare's birthplace, and consists of two pilaster-like buttresses, one on either side of the wide opening of the fireplace, and each extending backwards two feet from the opening and projecting into it, one a little less, the other a little more, than one foot. They must have borne part of the weight of the huge timber lintel or mantel-tree (long since removed and then bearing marks of fire) on which the masonry forming the front of the chimney rested. And a mass of new masonry, now covered by panelling and approximately a rude triangle, indicated the space from which the old work had fallen. Another peculiar feature, such as is seen in photographs of old English fireplaces, is a depression in the back of the chimney four and a half feet wide and twelve inches deep, beginning about thirty inches above the present floor, and disappearing nine or ten feet higher, through the gradual contraction of the flue to the width of the depression. Finally, it was found that the chimney contained two flues, the partition beginning seven or eight feet above the hearth. These were inserted, Mr. Isham believes, to carry off the smoke from two small fires to be built, one or both, in mild weather at opposite ends of the fireplace, where was found, beneath each flue, an iron bar for supporting pots and kettles. In cold weather a single fire, as large as might be needed, would be served as well by two flues as by one. Once more there is European precedent for at least part of this arrangement, since in the middle ages there were sometimes two fireplaces in the same chimney and in the same room.

This fireplace is farther noticeable for the disproportion between its length, ten feet and four inches, and its height, not quite four feet; the former making it easier to have two small

fires, the latter easier to supply a sufficient draft for them, or for one large one, and so lessening the danger of a smoky chimney. The eye is at once struck by another peculiarity, of modern origin, the raising of the present floor about eight inches above the ancient hearth. This took place, for the most part, in 1868, when a new floor had to be laid and the whole building was made higher. There would have seemed no reason for keeping the floor on a level with a fireplace which had long been not only out of use but out of sight. In making the final changes, now finished, the construction of another and lower floor would have been too costly and the surface was simply rendered even by being covered with oak, and at the north end was two inches higher than before. The difference in height at least emphasized the characteristics of the ancient fireplace and it was more important to show that as nearly as possible in its original condition than to bring modern work into conformity with it.\*

It is proper to add that the ruins of a brick oven were found on the left, or east side of the fireplace, but this is supposed to have been introduced by Jasper Griffing towards the close of the eighteenth century. Of greater consequence are marks which seem to indicate a fireplace on the level of the second floor. If this is original it shows that this floor was in existence from the beginning and that the tradition of a high hall must be given up. But Mr. Isham does not believe the upper fireplace to have been built at that early period, but to have been constructed when the second floor was built.

Mr. Isham is certain that a section of from four to eight feet at the top of the chimney consists of modern work. We are told that the walls of the house, originally fifteen feet high, were raised two and a half feet in 1868, and the chimney would naturally have been raised as much as the walls, or more. A comparison of pictures taken before and after that date seems to show that the chimney rises higher above the roof than was once the case. It is, moreover, reasonable to assume that the old top needed repairs and so we can explain the new work without assuming that much of the old work has disappeared. There

\*A plan of the fireplace, with a vertical section, will be found at the close of this paper.

is, in fact, no doubt that not only the fireplace but the larger part of the chimney are what they were when first built. And what they then were in general character has long been visible from without at a point where the stucco has fallen from the chimney, showing the old masonry. This consists, in Mr. Isham's words, "of rather small flat stones, with large mortar joints," and the old masonry inside is of the same description, as far as it has been uncovered. In fact it was not the nature but the extent of what remains of the original structure which most of us have particularly desired to ascertain. This could only be done by the removal of the plaster, and it was impossible to remove enough to settle the question without diverting money given for the construction of an exhibition room from its designated purpose. The north wall was exposed by the side of and above the fireplace to a point somewhat higher than the second floor. Except for the triangular space already mentioned as directly over the fireplace, what was laid bare was old, as was expected. A large part of this wall adjoining the chimney may fairly be supposed to be original, with allowance made, of course, for what may have been added at the top when the walls were heightened. The east or rear wall extends but a few feet, ending with the wing or ell, or rather with what was a small room in the reentrant angle, which might have been a stairwell and which occupied the place of the present stairs. The little work that was uncovered in the east wall seemed old, and relatively old work was found near the angle in the wall of the wing. The west wall, or that facing the street, was uncovered only at the front door, and on the line of the second floor when that was removed. In neither place does old masonry seem to have been found. It may, nevertheless, exist below the level of the second floor. Such testimony as has been obtained about the changes made in 1868 is conflicting, but it is on the whole to the effect that as much as half of the ancient wall was not disturbed, the larger part of that being to the north of the door. But if the architect saw no old work above the level of the second floor, and some new work below it, we seem forced to the conclusion that less of the west wall is original than had been supposed, though some of it may be presumed to be so. Of the south wall, Mr. Isham writes: "Everything seemed to show that the

wall had been rebuilt;" he remembers "no old work." And it is the general, though not the universal, opinion of those who remember the changes of 1868 that the south wall is substantially new. In the foundation some new work was found in the form of a lining, but the old work remained behind it and there seems no reasonable doubt that the original foundation of at least the main building is virtually intact.

But could the modern part of the house be made to disappear we should certainly see a roofless ruin, with the great north chimney, like a low crumbling tower, standing amongst and partly supporting ragged fragments of wall, but a ruin in which we could trace three sides of the square room in which we have fancied Whitfield to have faced his first New England winter in the late autumn of 1639. But what should we see if chimney and walls stood as Whitfield left them in 1650? There are several pictures of the building made before the general reconstruction of 1868, and the Museum contains a model prepared in 1855. Changes had been made in the course of the eighteenth century but we do not know that they affected the external appearance of the house except by the removal of the south chimney, the introduction of at least one window in front and the enlargement of others. And there is a view based on a drawing made in 1862, and agreeing with the model just mentioned, which is not only far more picturesque than the rest, but is so largely in virtue of the correspondence which appears between the wing on the east and the venerable north end, so that the former looks not less venerable. Of the north end, as shown in the picture in question, it is enough to say that it looks, as it should, lower than at present and in consequence a little broader, which it was not. In the angle between the main building and the ell is the small stone structure already referred to as perhaps a stairwell, and which strengthens the picturesque effect of angles and broken lines characteristic of this view. The effect is completed by another projecting chimney at the east end or rear of the ell of the same general pattern as the principal one and strongly suggesting an essentially contemporaneous origin. It is naturally smaller than the other, and has only one sloping offset instead of three, but makes up for this sobriety of outline by thrusting itself into and finally

emerging from an aggressively overhanging wooden gable which contained two secret closets, one on each side of the chimney, and behind the wall. All this is lost in the modern wing, which has no irregularities of form, is longer than its predecessor by the width of one room, and is of the height of the main building.\*

As to the arrangement of the interior in Whitfield's time, we have even less material for positive assertion, and can assert positively only this, that after 1868, at all events, there remained no recognizable traces of the original arrangement. Hence, in such changes as might be made, there was no danger of destroying anything ancient existing within the walls. There is still preserved an oak stair-rail made of the old timber, but this throws no light on the primitive interior. I have, however, already referred to a tradition that the front part of the house consisted of a single room as high as the side walls, if not as high as the roof. This apartment was used, it is said, for public worship and, we may suppose, for other public assemblies, until the first meeting-house was built, presumably three or four years after the settlement. It was made more suitable for family use by folding partitions which could be let down or drawn up as occasion required. This tradition is traceable to a former owner of the house, Mrs. Nathaniel Griffing, who died in 1865, when she lacked but two days of completing her ninety-eighth year, and who was, of course, born in 1767. Her husband had inherited the Whitfield property in 1800, and her interest in it must have been strong much earlier, while the tradition must have come down from some period still nearer the days of Whitfield. The circumstantial character of this account renders it more credible. If it be asked how the house, even with movable partitions and even when enlarged by the erection of the ell, containing very likely an upper room, could have been a comfortable abode for Mr. Whitfield's large family, it can be replied that few persons would have asked the question then. A generation or two earlier, and to some extent in Whitfield's own generation, a country squire in England might have had as few rooms and as small a house as the first minister of Guilford. At the close of the seventeenth century the house of

\* The view described will be found after Dr. Walker's paper on "The Colonial Minister."

an important county family had but one upper room, where the squire slept in a curtained bed while his daughters and the maids slept without curtains around him, and the sons and serving-men in the hall below, in which, moreover, the entire household sat when indoors during the day. In this case, as in multitudes of others, the original high hall had evidently been divided by a floor, but this was almost always done after, perhaps long after the house was built, and was done, of course, at an additional outlay, by way of improvement, just as a modern house is often made more spacious and commodious as the owner's wealth increases. Hence, Mr. Whitfield's high hall, if he had one, might have been the result of a wish to avoid extravagance rather than of a wish to give greater dignity to his dwelling. His own wealth need not have prevented this, for if, as is virtually certain, he was very influential in framing the early "orders" of the town, then we may doubtless see his hand in the precaution (not taken in New Haven) against the acquisition by the richer men of large bodies of land. No one might, without the permission of the majority of the freemen, "put in his estate above five hundred pounds to require accomodations proportionable in any divisions of land," while "the poorest planter," perhaps worth ten pounds or less, could have land "proportionable" to an estate of fifty pounds. The brotherly, if not democratic, spirit thus shown would probably incline Whitfield to seek simplicity and avoid ostentation in his own domestic arrangements. Nevertheless the question as to the height of the room remains an open one. Mr. Isham, looking on the tradition with favor, is yet constrained to say, "As regards the great questions of the house, the alterations have no real evidence to offer."

In such circumstances a restoration in the proper sense was impracticable because no one could be said to know what to restore. But it was both practicable and necessary to prepare the interior for the uses of the Historical Museum which the trustees were required by the legislature of Connecticut to establish in the Whitfield house. This involved the opening of an exhibition room as large, and likewise as attractive, as the conditions permitted. To destroy anything ancient in constructing a room intended for the reception and preservation of ancient

things would have been as absurd as it would have been monstrous, but the modern partitions and floor might be destroyed without scruple. The tradition haunting the house, its oldest tenant, summoned us to do just this and the house refused to supply incredulous science with any exorcism for banishing or silencing its tenant. The testimony of hundreds of colonial houses to the colonial habit of building "low between joists" was weighty, but could scarcely outweigh the belief of several generations, derived, it is most likely, from the knowledge of an earlier generation, that this particular house was otherwise built, added to the fact that the colonist who built it might have seen lofty halls by the score in ancient English dwellings, and the fact that the fireplaces and chimney which this colonist built bear a degree of testimony to his apparent preference for antiquated forms. A more practical, if not more weighty, objection to tearing away the upper floor was the inconvenience, to say no more, of sacrificing half the floor space available at the time. But more space would be available later, and the dignity and attractiveness which might be secured in a rather lofty apartment carried the day in favor of height.

But could this long, high room, even if it should have dignity, have legitimately any other kind of attractiveness? The bits of plaster found clinging to the old stonework of the north wall make it probable that at first this end of the original room presented the aspect, picturesque, perhaps, but not beautiful, of rough plastering on rough stones. When the room was lengthened (if it was), this might have been covered by a wainscot or hangings or both. But if Whitfield, as I have suggested, desired to set an example of simplicity and economy, then the chances seem to be that his large hall was characterized by the very rude simplicity of bare, uneven walls. In 1632, or earlier, Governor Winthrop himself condemned costly wainscots as a bad example "in the beginning of a plantation."\* On the other hand, not only must Mr. Whitfield have been familiar with handsome oak panelling in England, and very possibly under his father's roof, but close at hand in New Haven, then famous for its expensive houses, there seems to have been some fine oak wainscoting of "the best of joiner's work," and Governor Eaton's

\* Savage's *Winthrop*, ed. 1853, i. 88.

great house, furnished with hangings of different colors (as with tapestry for the beds), in the upper rooms, may well have had a wainscoted hall and parlor below stairs.\* And since it was not seemly to lodge the commonwealth of Connecticut in something a good deal like a barn, and since an oak wainscot would illustrate some interiors which could have been found by the middle of the seventeenth century in what is now Connecticut, and since Mr. Whitfield was rich enough to have had such adornments had he wished, the chief exhibition room of the Historical Museum was furnished with a simple oak panelling of a pattern to be seen in the room itself in various photographs of English interiors of Whitfield's period and even of his county of Surrey. A wainscot covering the whole wall would have been too costly, as would tapestry or leather hangings. Accordingly green burlap, as having a sort of neutral character and easily to be replaced by something else, was used above the woodwork. Even this might suggest in a modest way the hangings in Governor Eaton's "green chamber" where Whitfield may have slept. To place the stairs, patterned after ancient examples, in the space occupied by the ancient stairwell, and to open a fireplace in the south chimney such as must in early times have faced the great one at the north end, came as near being restoration as the case admitted of. The new fireplace, it is true, had to be smaller than the old one because the south chimney, a modern one, is smaller than the other. On the other hand, a feature of the larger English halls, the gallery for musicians, was almost reproduced unintentionally when a railing was placed for safety on that side of the small entry at the head of the stairs which faces the larger room, at a considerable height above the floor of the latter. This gives very much the effect of a gallery, though at the side instead of the end of the apartment, as in the old halls. It has to be acknowledged that the somewhat ornate room looks rather out of keeping with the rude fireplace which is by far its most important feature and which is worth immeasurably more than any amount of graceful decoration. But sooner or later this hall could reasonably be expected to be occupied by handsome old furniture and the

\* Stiles, *History of Judges*, pp. 64, 66, and *N. H. Prob. Rec.*; quot. in Isham and Brown's *Early Conn. Houses*, pp. 97-111, 287-296.

walls to be hung with pictures, even more sadly out of keeping with an ungainly environment. And the old fireplace, a priceless possession, would justify itself even in a palace, like a king in rusty armor standing in the midst of bowing or kneeling courtiers in silk and velvet.

In all that I have said thus far about the Henry Whitfield house I have really been talking about the State Historical Museum and its collections. For the house is the great feature of that and them, the choicest treasure of the institution, exclusively and securely its own. And the act of the legislature establishing the Museum was in a manner the announcement by our Little Mother, the Commonwealth of Connecticut, of her intention to do honor to Whitfield's dwelling by making herself a home at his fireside. The announcement was at first heeded almost unconsciously by those who had to introduce her into her domicile. The first entry in the manuscript catalogue is that of the gift, coming from the State capital, and sent by a member of the Governor's staff, of a letter written in 1781 by a Connecticut soldier who had commanded a brigade in the campaign against Burgoyne, and two of whose descendants, natives of Litchfield, have been very nearly the most famous of American men and women, and addressed to a state official, brother of a Connecticut signer of the Declaration of Independence, and nephew of an early head of Yale college, and one who, by pledging his personal credit to the State, helped to equip the expedition which under the Connecticut hero, Ethan Allen, took Ticonderoga. Next come two relics of the Charter Oak, another "Talking Oak," with a large part of what is most memorable in the commonwealth to tell us of. And it soon became an object of conscious and special effort to make the collections, which can never be very large, illustrative as far as possible of the history of the State and the life of its people. It was felt that this small institution could best justify its existence and prove its right to be called a State institution by thus limiting its scope. It can never enter into competition with a society like this, for example, even in the field in which they glean together, but it can aspire to have at least a distinctive character in virtue of what it forbears to glean in other fields. And undoubtedly there remain, in spite of the zeal of associated and individual

collectors, busy at their task for generations, enough objects of historical interest in garrets and cellars and barns, and in beautiful old colonial parlors, to fill the Whitfield house several times over. Let me give an example of the way in which our slowly growing collections, still short of five hundred deposits,\* illustrate the early life of our people, their industry, their thrift, their ingenuity, in virtue of all of which nobody employed another to do anything for him except what he could not do himself, which was very little. A certain series of deposits begins with a bundle of flax (which had to be raised on the premises for the purpose last year,) lying on a flax brake, evidently homemade, and used to crush the hard parts of the stem. Next comes a very different implement, light and not ungraceful, a wooden flax-knife, which could easily have been made at home and which separated the larger fragments from the fibre. Then we have a hatchel, on which the skill of a craftsman was probably employed, and by which the fibre was farther cleansed and the flax freed from the tow. The result of these processes (with one or two others not illustrated as yet) is shown in a mass of flax prepared for spinning more than seventy years ago. The flax-wheel follows, the wheel itself made by the wheelwright, who in those days was commonly near at hand, but the frame probably constructed on the farm, while the four curved branches of the distaff were joined at one end in the woods by nature, at the other end by anybody who could tie a string. With the wheel goes the cup in which the spinner's fingers must be moistened, and of which two forms are on exhibition, both chiefly of nature's making. One is a small gourd from the garden, which the boy who picked it could finish with his knife; the other, rather less primitive, became brought within reach by the progress of New England commerce, the shell of a cocoanut, but also prepared for duty at the wheel in a domestic factory. Next to the spinning-wheel and its appurtenances there is a reel for winding the linen thread into skeins; then swifts for winding the skeins into balls; a quill-wheel for transferring the balls by another winding to the quills, or bobbins, which were to be slipped into the

\* The number of deposits in the Museum April 22, 1911, was 751. A few loans had been recalled and a very few articles were missing. The number of visitors registered April 1 was just 15,000.

shuttle for weaving; specimens of quills and a couple of shuttles as representatives of the loom, itself too large to be exhibited;\* and finally a linen napkin which the weaver had left half woven when he dropped his shuttle one day and picked up his musket and marched away, perhaps to Bunker Hill, to finish his work when he came home.

In the Museum are to be seen a few, as yet too few, memorials of colonial gentility, as also of colonial scholarship. There is the great wainscot chair of Governor Leete, a less imposing chair of Governor Saltonstall, a roundabout chair of John Hart, first minister of East Guilford and long regarded as the first graduate of Yale college, a patch-box which comes originally from a branch of the Wolcotts, with a tiny mirror under its lid to show the lady whether the patches were in their places on her cheek or her chin, and the triangular wooden hat-box in which Captain Nathaniel Johnson (who by the way, married a descendant of Governor Eaton) kept his cocked hat. His more distinguished brother, Samuel Johnson of Stratford and King's College, appears in a manuscript lecture on logic, read to his pupils in New Haven, in 1717, when he was not yet one and twenty, and who happened, just then, to constitute the entire resident faculty of the college; and also in a definition of geology given by him incidentally in 1730, and then as correct as it was comprehensive, and which embraced, among other subjects of terrestrial inquiry, optics, navigation and music.

In illustrating the history of the commonwealth some emphasis has designedly been given to its less known passages. This illustration (not to speak of a few books which we hope will grow into many) is for the most part very simple and inexpensive, for there have been scarcely any funds for the purchase of such objects as we would gladly have obtained. There is as yet no endowment and the State appropriations serve chiefly for current expenses and urgent improvements. To make sure of going back far enough in history, there is a plate, sent us from England, and showing the arrowheads used by neolithic man before Britain had become an island, procured for comparison with those used by the race from whom our fathers

\* But since procured and placed with a variety of the homelier deposits in the spacious attic, now well lighted.

bought our territory. The progress which followed is curiously exhibited in a stone axe lying beside an English-made tomahawk, testifying to the growth of peaceful (and profitable) trade. There are certain mementoes of the Tories, illustrative of the ample good that was in them, and was rather prodigally given away in the persons of the exiles who founded New Brunswick and Ontario. There are maps, mostly homemade and to be replaced, it may be hoped, by better ones some day, showing Connecticut before the charter, when it included a large part of Long Island and had an Atlantic coast; and Connecticut after the charter, when as far as the king's word availed, it stretched across the continent and had a Pacific coast; and a Connecticut town named Westmoreland, belonging to Litchfield county in 1774, and bringing in the Susquehanna and the Delaware, which watered it, to be sisters of the Housatonic and the Naugatuck.

But I must close abruptly with a word of acknowledgment, spoken not in forgetfulness of many other most generous contributors, but as an act of simple justice to a company of ladies who, as an organization and as individuals have, next to the State itself, done most to create and equip the Museum, the Connecticut Society of the Colonial Dames of America. After giving nearly one-tenth of the purchase money, they paid more than two-thirds of the cost of the recent changes, while members of the society have made very valuable additions to the collections, and two of them have rendered services, some of which can hardly be over-estimated, on the board of trustees. Thus daughters of Whitfield and Davenport and Hooker, of Leete and Eaton and Haynes, have with others provided a fair chamber for our Little Mother in which she may dwell for coming centuries in the grave, spiritual beauty of her most strenuous youth. And by that fireside, which is an altar, none of whatever creed will forbid her to confess the enduring Power which makes for righteousness in her own creed, already recited for centuries, *Qui transtulit sustinet.*\*

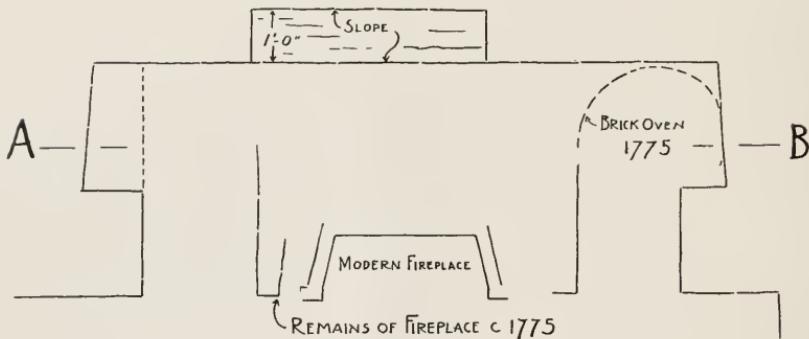
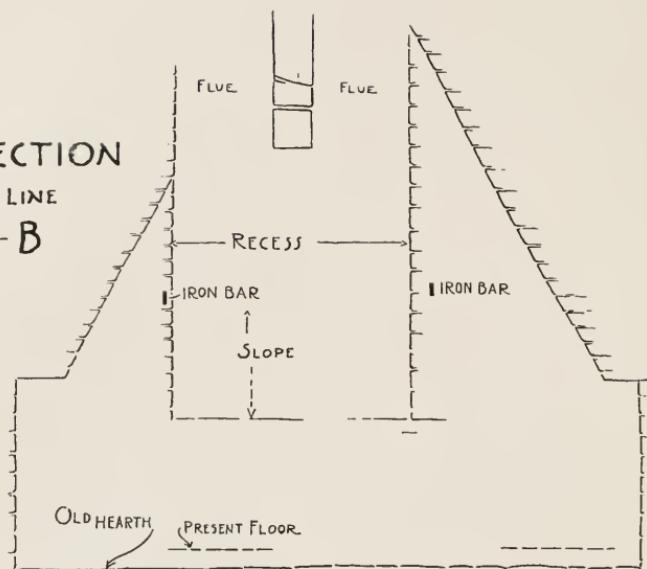
\* The motto of Connecticut; "He who transplanted sustains."

[The necessary revision of this paper has been made difficult by the writer's impaired health. He has particularly to regret that he could not get access to his notes, stored for two or three years in closets and elsewhere, without too much physical effort, and is therefore able to furnish very few references, and to make but scanty acknowledgment of valuable assistance.]





SECTION  
ON LINE  
A-B



PLAN OF ORIGINAL FIREPLACE

KINDLY FURNISHED (IN THE FORM OF A DRAWING WHICH COULD NOT BE REPRODUCED TO ADVANTAGE) BY THE ARCHITECT WHO DESIGNED THE EXHIBITION ROOM, MR. NORMAN M. ISHAM, OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

PAPERS READ  
AT THE  
FORMAL OPENING  
OF THE  
STATE HISTORICAL MUSEUM,  
IN THE  
HENRY WHITFIELD HOUSE,

September 21, 1904.



## GUILFORD AMONG HER NEIGHBORS.

*By Professor Samuel Hart, D.D., D.C.L., of the Berkeley Divinity School,  
Middletown, President of the Connecticut Historical Society.*

We who have come from other parts of the State in answer to your kind invitation, may be pardoned for asking why it is that a State Historical Museum should be established in this town. It is not the first place founded in the limits of what is now Connecticut, nor is it the capital city, nor yet at the centre of territory or of population. We cannot expect that the building will open its doors to throngs of tourists, who, after giving hours to other objects of interest on their line of travel, will turn aside here for a few minutes and come out to check off in the guide-book one more thing seen and out of the way. None of these too obvious reasons will account for our gathering here to-day. Something, indeed a great deal, might be said for the enthusiasm and energy of one who has made the history and fortunes of his adopted town his own, has taught even its own citizens to take a new interest in it, and has waited for opportunities to claim for it an honored place in the commonwealth. And again, we confess that there is no place within our borders where there is ready to hand a building like this—ancient, far beyond any other structure in the State, perhaps beyond any other in neighboring states, and probably the oldest dwelling in the territory of the thirteen colonies (for I think that even professional skeptics would find it very hard to prove the existence of an older one), built as strong as a fort, and doubtless meant to be ready to do duty as a fort, and also as spacious as a public hall, and a public hall of meeting we know it was as it is to-day. The structure still standing after all these years in a half isolated dignity, has invited the use to which it is now dedicated. And it is a great satisfaction to us who represent historical societies and patriotic associations, who care for records and mementos of the past, to know that as far as personal pledges and official action can

determine the future, the Old Stone House is forever safe from harmful decay and from no less harmful innovation, and is made of permanent service to the commonwealth.

But I am inclined to think that there is another reason, such as may be called historical or may be called mystical and perhaps is both, which makes Guilford a suitable place for the custody of some of those things which we include under the name of the antiquities of Connecticut. The place which this settlement held among its neighbors made it in some way a logical centre for them. When the first colonists came here in 1639, there were three distinct settlements of distinct characteristics within the limits of what was to be the Colony and later the State of Connecticut. On the west bank of the Great River, the Ultima Thule of that day, safely below the bounds of Massachusetts, was a new commonwealth, embodying clearly defined theories in church and in State, destined to be the model of a great republic and indeed of all modern constitutional government; it had been founded by practical men, led by a practical preacher and a practical lawyer, and it had a very practical purpose. About the same time, at the mouth of the same river and also on its western bank, another party of men had built a fort and had laid out a tract of land for the occupation of persons of quality and others who were expected soon to arrive; theirs was the military government of the day, and the men who were stationed there were on the watch not only for the protection of the interests of those whom they immediately represented, but also for the defence of their neighbors; their leaders were a soldier and an engineer. A few years later, a third company, who had come from England by way of Boston, had found a home for themselves at the fair haven made by the mouth of the Quinnipiack, and had laid out there a four-square city; they combined a spirit of theocracy and a spirit of commercial enterprise; they were led by a theologian and a wealthy merchant. Close after them came the settlers of this town, sailing directly from England, bringing with them Mr. Davenport's child, whom they left with the parents at New Haven, and Mr. Fenwick (coming for the second time) and his wife the Lady Boteler, whom they had escorted half of the way to the Saybrook fort when they reached this fair plain and laid out

the common about which they were to dwell. They were distinctively a company of yeomen, as the phrase then went, and this was the typical settlement of farmers; and they were a body of young men—their leader, to be sure, was forty-six years old, but no other of the “pillars” had passed his thirtieth year. Midway between an aristocratic government and a military post, they made a civil compact in which special precautions were taken that there should be no great inequality based on wealth, and they kept here for themselves and for posterity the large-bodied, wide-horned, red cattle which the wife of the governor of Saybrook had brought to these shores. Their organization was largely based on that of the New Haven colony, with which indeed the community soon became united, while their building was somewhat in the style of that at the mouth of the river to the east. For this, though undoubtedly the largest and the strongest, was not the only stone structure here; there were other stone houses and there was a stone meeting-house, a marvel for those times.

Mr. Davenport, it was said by one of his contemporaries, was “more fit for Zebulon’s ports than for Issachar’s tents;” the Guilford farmers did not seek a port, though they took up their lands not far from the sound; they were rather like the patriarch’s description of Issachar, a strong beast of burden crouching down in a land which he saw to be pleasant, bowing his shoulder to bear burdens and made to labor hard at his task. And in them we may see, as I think, the combination of certain of the most distinctive features of their neighbors to the right hand and to the left.

And I believe that we can also see something which makes a connection between this settlement and the colony directly north of it in Hartford and the sister towns. There was an independence here and a practical way of making plans and putting them into operation which reminds us of Hooker and Ludlow. If the compact which was formed seemed even more locally ecclesiastical than did that made in New Haven, I am inclined to think that it was in order that it might escape the danger of interference from the stronger people to the west. There must have been here from the first some ground of sympathy with the democracy of the Connecticut colony. Those

who had not the franchise were not debarred from the meetings of the burgesses, but had even the right of speaking in them; and equal social standing and equal power of public debate do not consist with exclusive political rights and theories. There were those in the New Haven confederation who submitted quite willingly when they learned that Connecticut had a charter and that the bounds of its jurisdiction extended over the settlements of the New Haven colony; among them were some, like Governor Leete, who felt strongly the need of union and were willing to make sacrifices for it, and others who, like Bray Rossiter, claimed that they were debarred from the rights of English subjects and called into question the civil authority of the jurisdiction. Thus Guilford bore her share, and more than her share, in preparation for the union and in accepting it when it was proclaimed; and as it made a link between the two colonies on the shore, so it was ready, after Saybrook had been united with Connecticut, to assist in bringing Connecticut and New Haven under one government.

We may go farther yet, and trace a connection, and almost claim a neighborhood, between our ancestors here and the Massachusetts colony. For did not John Higginson, who had taught the grammar school in Hartford, and had been chaplain of the Saybrook fort, and had come here to be colleague of Mr. Whitfield—did not John Higginson, when he had started to return to England, stop at his father's old home in Salem, accept ordination to the charge of the church there, and minister to the people of that typical Massachusetts town for eight and forty years? And if we would pursue neighborhood beyond the seas, we may well remember that the first minister here, Mr. Henry Whitfield, whose name this house will ever bear and whose memorial it will ever be, ministered to the end of his days by virtue of the authority which he had received when he accepted ordination at the hands of a bishop of England, his being the only example, as far as I know, of a minister in one of our early New England churches who had no special ordination on this side of the ocean.

So we think to-day of the way in which the little colony here, separate though it seemed to be from them all, had something which made a relationship between it and each of the three





VIEW OF NEW FIREPLACE AND SOUTH END OF LARGE ROOM.

Portrait of Henry Champion of Colchester, Deputy Commissary General of Revolutionary Army. Said to have brought first relief to soldiers at Valley Forge.

original colonies, to north, to west, and to east, had until well into the eighteenth century a living connection with Massachusetts, and did not wantonly break with the mother land of England.

The stone house standing here—if neighbors came from New Haven they might have called it a mansion; or from Saybrook, a fort; or from Hartford, a town hall. Mansion and fort and town hall it was; but we have chief pleasure in thinking of it as a home, the home of the chief man of the place, the pastor and the leader of the community. And it is well that, restored as near as may be to the pristine arrangement of its ample spaces, with walls which it will need many times the centuries that have already passed over them to bring to dust, not crowded by structures of these latter days, but standing as of old in the open fields, the State of Connecticut should maintain it as a place of historic witness, to which men may come to learn what sort of folk they were and what sort of deeds they did, who laid in these colonies such abiding foundations.

*“Tantae molis erat pro nobis condere gentem.”*

## THE COLONIAL MINISTER.

*By Professor Williston Walker, D.D., of the Yale Divinity School, New Haven, President of the New Haven Colony Historical Society.*

Had we been gathered this afternoon in a southern commonwealth of these United States to celebrate colonial beginnings, we might have assembled under the shelter of some stately planter's home on the banks of the James, and have looked upon its ample proportions, its dignified exterior, and the group of cabins adjoining, in which its humbler retainers had found their abode, as typical of the life of that bygone age. We meet to-day to commemorate the opening as a historical museum, not of a planter's but of a minister's home; and that it is a minister's home which is thus set apart as a permanent memorial is, in fact, as characteristic of the colonial beginnings of New England, as a planter's mansion would be typical of the prosperous days of southern colonial life. For the survival of the minister's house, under the friendly shelter of which we are to-day gathered, may stand as illustrative of the significance of the minister himself in early New England, where his prominence in all matters of social concern and civic interest was equal to that of any, while his actual leadership was, in most of the settlements of New England, the chief factor in the life of the community. It is right and proper that we should set apart to-day a minister's home for the perpetual preservation of the memories associated with the settlement of this portion of the ancient colony of Connecticut.

It is certainly fitting, therefore, to ask the question, what sort of a man the colonial minister was whose significance in New England's beginnings was so considerable.

One trait which he shared in common with many of those of whom he was the leader, was that of sacrifice. It is hard for us, as we look out over this smiling landscape on this brilliant September afternoon, to conceive of the privations which were necessitated by leaving the comfortable homes and the

settled ways of England for what was then this raw, unsubdued wilderness. The changes involved in the surroundings and the comforts of a Cotton abandoning his stately church edifice in the English Boston for the new, rough meeting-house amid the group of rude dwellings which bore that name across the Atlantic, or of a Davenport exchanging his London pulpit for the sanctuary of the oak at Quinnipiac, where all institutions had to be created afresh, or of a Whitfield leaving the pleasant farming country of Surrey for the then unsubdued wilderness in Guilford, implied sacrifices such as, in these days of easy communication, few emigrants are called upon to endure. It has often been said that the best gift that can come to any country is that of men; and the most desirable of all men who can come as such gifts are those who are moved to seek new homes by the impulse of conscientious principles rather than simply by the desire to better their financial condition. Such men were preëminently the colonial ministers; men who left comfortable homes, congenial companionships, scholarly environments, that they might advance a cause which was dear to them, and which they believed to be that of righteousness and truth.

Another characteristic of the colonial minister in general was that he was a man of force. He was a strong man, leading strong men. Not but that there were great differences in influence and power between the colonial ministers of New England; but certainly, to cite a single instance, there is no more remarkable example of the moulding authority of a ministerial leader anywhere to be found than that of John Davenport at New Haven, when he induced the settlers of that plantation, before a church had been formed or before they themselves knew who would be members of it, to resign the right of suffrage by a self-denying ordinance to those who should be of the future church membership, thus very possibly depriving themselves, under his forceful persuasion, of what is usually one of the most cherished of political rights. The wisdom of this action taken under the New Haven pastor's initiative, I do not now discuss; but it certainly ranks high as an illustration of persuasive leadership. Of John Cotton, Davenport's great contemporary at Boston, it was said, certainly with exaggeration,

but nevertheless with no inconsiderable degree of warrant, that "whatever he delivered in the pulpit was soon put into an Order of Court if of a civil, or set up as a practice in the church if of an ecclesiastical, concernment." What was true of these two eminent men might be said in some measure of the whole body of the colonial ministry.

A third characteristic of the ministers of early New England was their love of education. They were themselves prevailingly men of superior intellectual training, and they believed that only as knowledge should be made accessible to the many, as well as special training be given to the leaders of the community, could the best interests of State and Church be preserved. John Eliot, that quaintest and in many respects most lovable of the ministers of early New England, well voiced the general sentiment which animated them all and which led to the planting of schools and of a college in the very beginnings of colonial life, when he uttered this prayer while leading the devotions of the "Reforming Synod" of 1679, in words as sincere as they were unliturgical, "Lord, for schools every where among us! That our schools may flourish! That every member of this assembly may go home, and procure a good school to be encouraged in the town where he lives. That before we die, we may be so happy as to see a good school encouraged in every plantation of the country." Certainly the interest in education, which has always characterized New England and which New England has made part of our national heritage, is a debt which we owe in no small degree to the impress upon his own age of the colonial minister.

They were men, too, in not a few instances, of statesmanlike insight. It has sometimes been alleged that New England in its early days was a priest-ridden land. No conception could be further from the truth. There was indeed a veneration for the ministerial office which does not now obtain. It was a source of intellectual light and spiritual leading to the community of that day to an exclusive degree difficult for us easily to realize in an age in which so many other leaderships of law, of medicine, of science, of journalism, and of education, now share with it its former intellectual preëminence. The strength of the early colonial ministry and its power over those who were





SUPPOSED APPEARANCE OF EXTERIOR IN HENRY WHITFIELD'S TIME: APPROXIMATE.

moulded by its influence were not in any sacerdotal reverence which it aroused, but in its direct and forceful leadership; and in its most gifted representatives this leadership rose to statesmanlike height. Whatever may have been the share of Roger Ludlow, with his knowledge of the law, in the framing of the fundamental orders of Connecticut,—and I would not abate a whit the large credit that may be due to him for its content or for the form in which that noble constitution of 1639 was clothed, no one can doubt that a chief part of its inspiration came from the brain of a ministerial founder of Hartford, Thomas Hooker. To him was due the assertion, in the months immediately preceding the framing of the constitution, of such cardinal principles of political wisdom as that the “foundation of authority is laid firstly in the free consent of the people” and “that the choice of the public magistrates belongs unto the people by God’s own allowance.” These are basal truths that have been wrought into the very fabric of our American civil life.

It is eminently fitting, therefore, that when we meet to-day to open this State Museum, in a house built for the colonial minister who was foremost in the planting of this Guilford community, we should call to mind some of the traits of these spiritual leaders of early New England. They were a race of strong men who left their impress upon those whom they led, who witnessed to truth as they understood it with self-denying fortitude, and who have made the story not merely of New England, but of our country as a whole, far other than it would have been had they not done their work. Well may we honor them to-day for what they were and what they did in the time when New England’s foundations were laid.

## THE CHARACTER OF HENRY WHITFIELD.

*By Mrs. Frank W. Cheney of South Manchester, a trustee.*

Coming to-day to open to the uses of the Commonwealth of Connecticut this ancient house, which the State Trustees, the Colonial Dames of Connecticut, and the people of Guilford have done their best to restore and adorn, there is no question that springs up in our minds more spontaneously than this :

Who and what manner of man was he for whom it was built ; by whose ideas its form was shaped ; who slept and sometimes ate in it (when there was anything to eat) ; who studied and wrote,—aye, and preached in it, and whose children romped in its garret and were punished in its corners ?

Most of us are somewhat familiar with the facts of his life and have drawn inferences more or less truly in accordance with them. To many the fact of his return to England has been a blighting one. But until we understand the man we cannot understand the deed. Bear with me, therefore, while I rehearse his history, trying to gather as we go such light as it sheds upon his character.

Henry Whitfield was born in 1591,\* in the County of Surrey, a region of softly rolling hills and deep embowered lanes such

\* This is the date given in Steiner's History of Guilford, and the author thinks that the date of 1591 given in Foster's *Alumni Oxoniensis* is "clearly wrong." But Whitfield entered Oxford in 1610, and if born in 1597 would have been but thirteen years old at that time, which makes it probable that Foster's record is correct. Born in 1591 he would have entered Oxford aged 19, graduated at 23, studied law two years, and entered the Church in 1618, aged 27. The canons of the Church require that a man be 23 before he be made Deacon, and a year older before he may become Priest. Another fact which makes it probable that he was born before 1597 is that his father, Thomas Whitfield, was licensed to marry Mildred Manning, his mother, on the 10th of January, 1585. Henry Whitfield, their second son, was in all probability born in less than twelve years after their marriage, and six years would be more likely. Again, it is very common to confuse the numbers 1 and 7, which in those days were written much alike, and so 1591 might have been read 1597. Again, if but thirteen in 1610, he would have been

as only southern England knows. His father was Thomas Whitfield, an eminent London lawyer, whose home was at Mortlake on the Thames, and whose wealth and influence enabled him to carry out his ambitions for his sons. He intended that his second son, Henry, should receive the education for which he seemed to show capacity, and should take his own place at the bar. His mother was Mildred Manning, a lady of a good Kentish family, in whose family lines is found the name of England's greatest poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, although descent from him is not claimed. Thus on both sides Henry Whitfield came from families not noble, but gentle, and containing some illustrious names.

Cotton Mather, in a paper entitled "Elisha's Bones, The Life of Mr. Henry Whitfield," alluding to the old saying that "A young saint makes an old devil," says: "No, a young *sinner* may make an old devil, but a young saint will certainly make an old angel; and so did our blessed Whitfield. He was a gentleman of good extraction by his birth, but of a better by his new birth, nor did his new birth come very long after his birth. In the very school itself he would be sometimes praying, and as he grew up he grew exceedingly in his acquaintance with God." It is therefore no surprise to find that after graduating at New College, Oxford, and beginning upon a legal training at the Inns of Court, the early religious tendencies claimed him for their own, and, as Mather says, "The gracious influences of the Holy Spirit upon his heart induced him to become a preacher of the gospel."

But this is to anticipate. A friendship made in Oxford between Whitfield and George Fenwick was continued through life and was fraught with important consequences to both. They both entered the University in 1610 and were most intimate throughout their stay there. They both died in England in 1657. The helpful disposition of Fenwick and his wife, the Lady Alice Boteler, had much to do with Whitfield's coming to America, and settling in Menuncatuck, which lay in part upon land originally purchased of the Indians by Fenwick and by him given to the settlers of Guilford, as he himself wrote about eighteen when he became "the contracted husband" of Margaret Hardware, who died in 1616.

See note at the close of this paper by Rev. W. G. Andrews.

to William Leete, for the "love he bore to Mr. Whitfield and his children." So do early friendships shape a man's destiny.

At this point we are tempted to diverge into a bit of romance, which, although not positively identified with the life of our Henry Whitfield, shows so remarkable a coincidence in date that we are justified in assuming that he is the man referred to.

In February, 1616, at which time it is supposed that Whitfield was studying law in London, there died in Peele, County of Chester, England, a maiden named Margaret Hardware, daughter of Henry Hardware. In her will, probated March 17, 1616, there are bequests to several friends, but chief among them is the following:

"Item, I give to Henrie Whitfield, my contracted husband, the sum of one hundred and forty pounds. Item, I give to the said Henrie Whitfeild one white 'beare' bowl, one Tune\* and cover and three spoons, one piece of gold of three pounds seventeen shillings. Item, I give unto the said Henrie Whitfield, more, one pair of Valence and two cushions of needle-work; four towels, two short and two long; three pair of sheets of flaxen of the best; four pillow-beares; one dozen of fringed napkins, four of the best table-cloths; two cupboard cloths; one feather bed, two bolsters, two down pillows, one arras coverlet, four blankets, and all the apparel that was provided for my marriage. . . . Memorandum, that if, after all my debts and legacies are paid, the remainder of my estate be above fifty pounds, that then Mr. Nicholas Byfield have only that fifty pounds, and my loving friend and contracted husband, Mr. Henry Whitfeild, have the rest of my whole estate."†

As we have seen already, Mr. Whitfield studied law for a year or two after leaving college. Perhaps if Margaret Hardware had not died he might have become a successful lawyer

\* The word *tune* is not found in any glossaries obtainable. The Century Dictionary gives as one meaning of the word *tun*, "a vessel or jar," and quotes from Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale* the line, "Wel ofter of the welle than of the *tonne* she drank." An English glossary of provincialisms gives as one definition of *tun*, "a small cup." It is probable that "a *tune* with cover" was a covered jar or vessel of some kind to hold ale or liquor.

† Weldon, 24. The spelling of the name Whitfield alternates between *field* and *feild*.

and thus have avoided those great conflicts within the Church into which he was led by his religious views. Who knows how much this early loss may have paved the way for "the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit" which took him into the ministry? The affections and the religious sentiments lie very near together in a tender and poetic nature, and the closing of one vent for feeling may open another. At all events, the impulse was strong enough to overcome the opposition of his family. In 1618 he was ordained a minister of the Church of England, ordained once for all, as he seems to have felt, so that no other setting apart for God's work in the world was ever necessary. In the same year he was made incumbent of the rich living of Ockley, in Surrey, and was married. At this time he was, according to Steiner, only twenty-one years of age, but according to Foster twenty-seven, and in view of his varied experiences the latter estimate seems much more probable.

The accepted spelling of the name Ockley, O-c-k-l-e-y, deprives it of its ancient meaning, which was Oak-lea, the land of oaks. "Here," says an ancient chronicler, "is a certain custom observed, time out of mind, of planting rose-trees upon the graves, so that this church yard is now full of them." Whether these roses became thornless, like those of St. Francis, we know not, but it is pleasant to associate our English saint with oaks and roses. His life at Ockley was presumably for many years one of the greatest peace and comfort. His wife was Dorothy Sheaffe, daughter of Thomas Sheaffe, a clergyman of Kent, and cousin to Joanna Sheaffe, whose mother was a Jordan and who married William Chittenden. Other cousins there were, Giles and Phineas Fletcher, sons of an ambassador to Russia from Queen Elizabeth, and themselves poets, writing under James I. and Charles I. So here we find again poetry and culture and high position.

Henry Whitfield and Dorothy, his wife, had a family of nine children, probably all born at Ockley.\* One died in infancy,

\* The baptismal record of the children of Henry Whitfield, as given in the N. E. Hist. & Gen. Reg. and drawn from church records at Ockley, is as follows:

(1) *Dorothy*, bapt. at Ockley, England, March 25, 1619. She is said to have been the wife of Samuel Desborough and to have returned to England with him. They had one daughter, Sarah,

another seems not to have come to America. Four daughters and two sons are all of whom we have information in maturity. He had abundant means, an honored position, and learning and culture, the crowning adornments of a rural life. His appearance is described as dignified and prepossessing, while eloquence and "a marvelous majesty and sanctity" are ascribed to his preaching. His manners had a lofty courtesy, and in all charity and gentleness he lived among other men as one loved and revered. His doctrines were accounted satisfactory, even at

born in Guilford, March, 1649. He had two other children by later marriages, and as the last wife, Rose Hobson, is said to have been married to him in 1655, it is evident that Dorothy Disbrowe must have died soon after they returned to England, if not before.

- (2) *Sarah*, bapt. at Ockley, Nov. 1, 1620; d. 1675, in Salem, Mass. She married in 1641 the Rev. John Higginson, who was her father's assistant as teacher and minister. In 1659 they set sail for England, but encountering bad weather put in to Salem, where Mr. Higginson had lived in his youth, and he remained there more than forty years.
- (3) *Abigail*, bapt. at Ockley, Sept. 1, 1622; d. Sept. 9, 1659. She married Rev. James Fitch of Saybrook; they had nine children, and they went with a Saybrook colony to Norwich, which they helped to settle.
- (4) *Thomas*, bapt. at Ockley Dec. 28, 1624. Probably did not come to Guilford; may have died young.
- (5) *John*, bapt. at Ockley Feb. 11, 1626. He came to Guilford with his father and went early to New Haven, after which he seems to have disappeared from history.
- (6) *Nathaniel*, bapt. at Ockley, June 28, 1629. He, as well as John, was excused from the night watch in Guilford. He returned to England probably about 1654, and became a merchant. He is more widely known in connection with his family than any other member of it, and was with his father as witness of his will just before his death in 1657. He was also executor of his mother's will. Samuel Sewall addressed a letter to him at the "Navy Office" in London, 1691.
- (7) *Mary*, bapt. at Ockley, March 4, 1631; a witness to her father's will.
- (8) *Henry*, bapt. at Ockley, March 9, 1633; died there February 28, 1634.
- (9) *Rebecca*, bapt. at Ockley, December 25, 1635.

In the Mass. Hist. Coll., 6th Series, between dates 1690 and 1699, there are letters from Samuel Sewall and Wait Winthrop, in which Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Nathaniel Whitfield and Mr. Samuel Whitfield are mentioned.

that critical period. People flocked in from the surrounding country to hear him preach, and says Mather: "Observing that he did more good by preaching sometimes abroad than by preaching always at home, and enjoying then a living of the first magnitude beside a fair estate of his own, he procured and maintained another godly minister at Okeley, and had the liberty to preach in many other places which were destitute of ministers." In this manner his acquaintance in the neighboring parishes and counties became greatly extended, and especially among the plain farming folk, a fact which in turn had its influence upon his selection of colonists when the time came later.

This sort of life, honored, easy and opulent, continued for twenty years, would make any man conservative, and Whitfield was doubtless so by birth and temperament. Yet we must not imagine that life at Ockley was all roses. The times were difficult and under Archbishop Laud's control especially and increasingly so for conscientious clergymen of the Established Church, as well as for those whose extreme convictions had long since made them Separatists. Whitfield had been for twenty years a conformist, but yet, says Mather, "a pious non-conformist was all this while very dear unto him." He was one who abounded in liberality and hospitality and "his house was much resorted unto" by those pious men whose non-conformity had got them into difficulties. Among these were Hooker and Davenport, Nye, Cotton and Goodwin, some of whom were soon to be prominent like himself in New England, and his near neighbors, as neighborhood was counted in those scattered and isolated colonies. It is worthy of note that while Whitfield was educated at Oxford, where in 1611 Laud became president of St. John's College, Hooker and Samuel Stone were students at Emmanuel in Cambridge, a college of Puritan foundation and teaching, a fact which may throw light upon the difference in their careers. Hooker and Whitfield very likely formed their friendship when Hooker was settled in the small parish of Esher in Surrey in 1620. From first to last, Whitfield's views were less tinged with Puritanism than were those of the strong and positive Hooker. At all events, it was some years after Hooker was obliged to flee to Holland before Whitfield was

summoned and censured by the High Commission Court, of which Laud was the head, for not reading the "Book of Sports" and for not conforming to some of the new and "popish" requirements of the liturgy.

The name of Puritan was a title self-given, by men who sought for purity and reform within the Church. According to Hume, a Puritan was a cross between a mad fanatic and a snivelling hypocrite. Our New England idea of a Puritan is of a man sterner than our rocks and harsher than our March weather.

By these side-lights we may get some idea of the typical Puritan, and comparing Whitfield with the type, we perceive that if he were a Puritan at all, he was so by circumstance rather than by nature, and that the stern stuff of the true Puritan was not in him.\* Comparing him with individuals, with the astute Winthrop, or the fiery Dudley of the Massachusetts Colony, with the long enduring Bradford of Plymouth, or the impracticable Williams of Providence Plantations, or even with Davenport, whose ideas of a theocracy and an aristocracy were so intimately blended, we can hardly call him a Puritan.

However, after serious discussion of the matters involved with some of his Puritan brethren, "seing much of scripture and reason on their side," Whitfield became at once a declared non-conformist and prudently left the ministry, or, as Mather picturesquely put it, "he embraced a modest secession." In 1638 he resigned the living of Ockley, sold his private estate, and made his plans for emigration to that new land which seemed, with hand outstretched across the waste of waters, to beckon to freedom both civil and spiritual. What matter if privation threatened and all kinds of terrors dismayed? These were but the mysterious curtain hanging between the pilgrim and his golden hopes of a more perfect state.

In 1636 Whitfield published in London a little book entitled "Some Helps to stirre up to Christian Duties." It was dedicated to Robert Grevil, Lord Brooke, who with Lord Say-

\* It will be understood that the word Puritan is here used not in its strict historical, but in its modern popular sense. For an accurate definition of the word, see *The Life of Thomas Hooker*, by Rev. Geo. Leon Walker, D.D.

and-Sele and some other Puritan noblemen owned the royal patent under which the colony of Saybrook, bearing their two names, Say and Brooke, was settled by the agency of Fenwick, coöperating with the younger John Winthrop. A glimpse of an original and precious copy of this book of Whitfield's, once the property of David Dudley Field, and with the names of sundry previous owners painfully inscribed upon its title-page, may be found in the Library of the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford. The book is the mirror of the man. Its perfect and polished English is the garb of thoughts most tender and gracious and poetical. He speaks in figures and tropes. The language of the Bible is the warp and woof of it, and under the titles of the "Caldeans" and of "Bohemia," he alludes to persons and places that had doubtless their English equivalents. Could Laud have been "the old Dagon" spoken of as so wicked and dangerous to God's people? Would that I could quote it to you in such manner as would give you a sense of it all. Yet one passage I must quote for its picture of the times:

"Some of you have seene and most of you have heard of the grievous evils that have befallen us; Behold and see if there was ever sorrow like unto our sorrow, to have the glorious Gospel of Christ taken from us, the Arke displaced and Dagon set in his roome, our ministers banished and our people betrayed unto anti-Christianisme, our country laid waste and desolate, many a family driven from home, not knowing where to lay their heads, many of us seldom going to bed with dry eyes, considering the many pressures, straights and necessities of ourselves and ours."

Again, he takes the mental position of a philosopher, contemplating as one apart from the scene of struggle the vicissitudes of our human life. "The world," he says, "is as a great ant or Emit Hill, where there are multitudes of those busie creatures, carrying and recarrying strawes, stubble and other such luggage, and everyone busie in doing something and intent to adde and bring to the heape. So in this world there is a mighty and general businesse, an earnest trudging about, a continued solicitousnesse, plotting and working upon the face of the earth. The Timeserver is busie to fit his sailes to every wind, marks what is in grace and fashion with the times, and

studies how he may please the most. The deepe and clung-headed\* politician, who dwells many times the next door to Atheisme, is busie in wheeling about his owne ends, is dark in his ways, and usually like a boatman looks one way and rowes another. . . . The voluptuous man is busie to draw out the quintessence of all sinnes and vanities, to sucke the sweet out of them, to array himself like a child of Paradise, and to have his part in all the pleasures of Nature." And thus it appears that trolley-cars, presidential campaigns and Paris fashions have not altogether changed our human nature, and that in busy carrying of straw and stubble, intentness to add to the heap, earnest trudging about after nothing and love of the sweet vanities, we are but imitators of our ancestors.

His religious expression, if not profound, nor the outcome of an intense nature, is yet pure and lofty and sincere, while his style has the inimitable directness and picture-making quality of the Elizabethan period. Thus, for instance, to quote again:

"It is the managing of our spirits that lyeth upon us as the chiefest of our employment. Oh, what studying is there in the world of sundry sorts of salutations, garbs and complements! What asking of each others health and welfare! Yet never to ask his Soule how it fareth; not so much as to bid it good morrow or good even! I meane, he passeth it by as a worthless and a neglected thing. What long pilgrimages doe many make with many a weary step! Yet they will not take a short journey down into their owne hearts nor know the behaviour and language of their owne Soules and consciences. Yet this, being the most noble worke and businesse of the mind, puts a luster and beauty upon the Soule. This is the speciall part of wisdome and makes a man the wisest man."

And now behold Whitfield, bidding goodbye to the study and the fruits of leisure and the aristocratic associations of a lifetime, and embarking, with his family and a number of friends and relatives and a party of plain and mostly poor people from his own neighborhood, upon a life of action and practical struggle hitherto undreamed of. From this time on he was a man out of his element. The quality of leadership was not born in him, although he had fortunately the best substitute for it

\* *Clung*, i. e.: shrunken, wasted. *Clunch*, i. e. impure clay; also close-grained, squat, stumpy.

in the power to win love and reverence. Danger was exchanged for danger, the peril of English persecution for the lurking peril of the savage, the prison and martyrdom for the great sea and the wilderness.

He who would found a colony requires first of all a practical knowledge of men and affairs. His business energy will be more important than his sanctity. He may be bigoted, self-willed, unamiable, but he must be able to foresee and provide for the practical needs which attend the arrival of a band of men, women and children in an unbroken wilderness. He must know that the first demand will be for the blacksmith and the carpenter. He must remember that while a scholar and a gentleman may be qualified to found a State, he will need a jack-of-all-trades to help him do it. The men who accompanied Whitfield to Guilford were of two classes, farmers and educated gentry. Among the latter were four lawyers and two ministers,\* counting Whitfield himself as both. There were apparently few men who knew the trades, no masons, no blacksmiths, perhaps one carpenter. The rest were mostly farmers. The yeomen of England made up an agricultural population equal to any the world has ever seen, and were men of such bone and sinew and perdurable toughness as to make the best possible material for colonization. It was, however, only after they had been trained for generations in the school of dire necessity that they developed the ingenuity, the ready wit, the faculty for *everything*, the comprehensive, all-around knowingness which go to make up the complete and finished Yankee.

On shipboard, while slowly sailing to their promised land, this band of emigrants made with each other a solemn covenant and signed to it their twenty-five names. It was probably written by Whitfield and his signature is last on the list. The chief engagement made in this covenant reads thus: "And we promise not to desert or leave each other or the plantation, but with the consent of the rest, or the greater part of the Company who have entered into this engagment." We shall see how these promises were kept.

Time fails to tell of the steps of the Colony's progress, nor need it be repeated here. Arrived at New Haven, it seems to

\* There is some doubt whether Hoadly acted as a minister until, after his return to Scotland, he became chaplain of Edinburgh Castle.

have been Mr. Whitfield who bought the Indian lands and pledged his own means for the purchase. He seems to have imbibed there some of the governmental ideas of Davenport, with their theocratic features. The vote by Church members only, the seven pillars, the title to lands being vested in the Church, etc., were features not at once developed, but which appeared after they were more settled. When a court was formed Whitfield never assumed the functions of magistrate or judge, but he knew enough law to have done so, and doubtless guided the young men who performed the actual duties. They desired an independent state and a constitution of their own, and the fascinating task of cutting a new one out of the whole cloth tempted them, as it tempted other men occupying virgin soil and dreaming of an ideal republic. But seeing themselves between the Scylla of New Haven and the Charybdis of the Connecticut Colony, and sure to be swallowed by one or the other, they, under the guidance of Whitfield, chose New Haven and a theocracy, rather than the untried democracy of the larger state. In doing so they but made an instinctive reversion to an aristocratic form of government such as they had lived under in England.

In standing at the head of a colony Whitfield had one inestimable advantage in that he was a minister. "The divinity that doth hedge a king" was, in New-Englandese, the divinity that doth hedge a minister. Perhaps that is what "doctor of divinity" means. He was considered to be the vicegerent of the Almighty. An indescribable awe hedged him about and made his every word and wish of sovereign weight and import. Mather says that Whitfield "carried much authority with him, and using frequently to visit the particular families of his flock, with profitable discourses on the great concerns of their interiour state, it is not easy to describe the reverence with which they entertained him." It is said that in the dreadful poverty of the following years "he mightily encouraged the people to bear with Christian patience and fortitude the difficulties of the wilderness they were come into, not only by his exhortations but also by his own exemplary contentment with low and mean things." He never labored with his hands, and he begged that his two sons, Nathaniel and John, might be excused from the night-watch of the town, with its discomforts and perils, show-

ing that he considered them privileged persons, and apparently valuing their safety above their hardihood.

Building of houses went on along with state-building. The stone house for the minister was probably one of the first erected. The choice of site was good and the house perhaps better than anyone else in the colony could afford. Its simple lines express not so much the taste of the owner as the limitations of necessity. To get any skilled work done in those first years of extreme effort and hardship must have been well-nigh impossible. The house is a good one and was a remarkable triumph of love's labor. Rev. Dr. Wm. G. Andrews has written its history with painstaking detail, in another labor of love which needs no repeating here.

And now came on the years whose hardships tried men's souls. Before 1649 seven of the leading emigrants, all young men but one, were dead. Then began the removals to the old country, to Boston, to New Haven, and to other places. By 1660 twenty out of the original twenty-five signers were gone. Henry Whitfield was the first to return to England in 1650. To look at this fact in any tolerant light we must first consider what had been going on in England. Charles I was executed in 1649. There were two wild years when Cromwell kept England and Scotland under the harrow, pursuing the fugitive prince, creating and dissolving parliaments, sweeping the seas with the fleets, and making hard times for Papists and good times for Puritans. The English Inquisition was over, and men dared to call their souls their own. The bugle was sounded for recall, and those who trusted the great Protector were marching back. There came to Whitfield, who had never been obnoxious even to the old government, urgent invitations to return. He had expended all his fortune for the colony and his family. His health was failing. The people were called together to see if they could support him. They were unable to squeeze out more than a few shillings to add to his salary of 105 pounds. The most they could say was that they "hoped they could continue their present some." Mr. Whitfield "judged that the people did so much as they were able and dealt respectfully and kindly with him, but yet he could not any farther engage himself than formerly." And so the end came. "At the time of parting the whole town accompanied him to the water-

side, with a spring-tide of tears because they should see his face no more." And perhaps some of the tears were shed because those who stayed knew they should see old England no more. On his way to Boston he was driven by contrary winds to Martha's (then called Martin's) Vineyard, and there became interested in the work of Thomas Mayhew among the Indians, and this led him also to visit John Eliot at Roxbury. And it followed that on his return to England he wrote two little appeals for the Indian work under these apostles, books with fanciful titles like his early writings. They were: "The Light appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day, or, a Farther Discovery of the Present State of the Indians in New England, concerning the progresse of the Gospel amongst them." And

"Strength out of Weakness, or, a Glorious Manifestation of the further progresse of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England."

In this latter work are enthusiastic expressions concerning "the Spirit into which these poore Creatures are sweetly baptiz'd."

This Indian episode was perhaps but the natural consequence of wind and weather; but when we remember the sacred charge which he was leaving at Guilford; when we recall the solemn covenant never to forsake each other, by which he, as well as the humblest, had bound himself eleven years before on their voyage outward-bound; when we think of the example set by this shepherd of the flock which many of the gentry who had means for their return were not slow to follow, until William Leete and William Chittenden were the only ones of the original leaders who remained; when we contemplate the sad and deserted and the sometimes bitter feeling of those who were left behind, taken with the fact that there seems to be no correspondence extant between Whitfield and the Guilford people after his return,—then it seems to me we must feel the futility of his taking up at the eleventh hour the cause of the American Indian. It was a cause just then popular with certain members of Parliament, to whom he addressed himself.

Mr. Whitfield soon found himself reinstated in the English Church, which, in a true sense, had never ceased to be *his* church, and took charge of a church in Winchester. The settled and scholastic air of that historic town must have been

most grateful to his taste after the crudeness of a new settlement. He spent about six years there and died in 1657. His will was witnessed in Winchester by his son Nathaniel and his daughter Mary, who seem to have been the only members of his family near him. It conveyed all his estate to his wife, to be by her divided among their children. She, poor woman, was left behind, with perhaps some of the younger children, when he returned to England, and probably never saw his face again. She remained in Guilford certainly until 1659, at which time he had been two years dead, and is said by a happy euphemism to have been "managing the estate." With the assistance of Gov. Leete and her son-in-law, the Rev. John Higginson, she attempted to sell the house and lands for a grammar-school. Failing in this, it was finally sold in London by her son Nathaniel to a Major Robert Thompson, in whose family the property long remained, occupied by tenants, a detriment to the interests of Guilford. In that year, 1659, her son-in-law, Rev. Mr. Higginson, and Sarah Whitfield, his wife, departed, intending to go to England, but being driven by stress of weather into his home port of Salem, he remained there forty-eight years until he died. In all probability Mrs. Whitfield accompanied them when they left Guilford, as her house was sold. How long she may have lingered on this side of the Atlantic we do not know, but she died in Wapping, in the County of Middlesex, England, in 1669, as shown by a power of attorney from her son Nathaniel as executor of her will. The Rev. Thomas Ruggles, a later pastor of Guilford, gives a mournful picture of the condition of the people for about twenty years after Mr. Higginson departed. "In this headless state of the church," says he, "they fell into great confusion and diversity of opinions. Many moved to Killingworth, others elsewhere. Some returned later." From such a blow it is doubtful if the town ever recovered.

Looking back over the life of this interesting man, we seem to see one who is caught between two cross-seas. Early life, by training and circumstance, fostered the refined scholar, the gentleman, perhaps the recluse. Later life demanded the stern qualities, the energy and hardy self-denials of the pioneer. Nature made him devout, spiritual, poetical, full of delicate fancies. Guilford called on him to grapple with material problems. Education and

temperament made him a conservative. The times called for radical principles and measures. He loved England and her Church, and belonged to both as a picture belongs in its frame. Some coarser men were more effective in our New England history, and there were many, too, of delicate fibre who were faithful unto the end,—who having put the hand to the plow never turned back. But standing thus at the point where the judge is ready to give sentence, let him first count the cost of what Whitfield had already done for the cause, the sacrifice of home and all that had sweetened life, the generous lavishing of his private fortune for the common good, the kindly hospitalities wherewith he sheltered the suspected ones, the consolations he had given to those discouraged, and the piety and learning which brought him reverential love from his followers. And having thus taken in some degree the measure of the man, the judge will say: "Henry Whitfield was so good a man that he lacked but an ounce or two more of virile courage to be a better."

#### NOTE.

The pamphlet in which the foregoing paper first appeared was sent in 1909 to Rev. Hereford B. George, senior fellow of New College, Oxford, Whitfield's College, of which he, too, was for a short time a fellow. Mr. George of his own accord very kindly made search for additional information and sent us in January, 1910, the result of his search. It is a real sorrow to be obliged to add that Mr. George died in December, 1910. He was a student of history and published several works in his own field. The last, "Historical Evidence" (1909), was favorably reviewed in the *New York Nation*, in which attention was called to the fact, illustrated in the book and entitled to be noticed whatever one's personal opinions may be, that believers in Christianity can accept the established results of modern study and thought without having their faith weakened.

The new information about Whitfield was drawn from the registers of New College and of Winchester College, one of the ancient endowed public schools of England. Both these institutions were founded late in the fourteenth century by a Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham, and are closely connected. According to these registers Henry Whitfield was born at Greenwich, in the county of Kent, and not at Mortlake, Surrey, where his father lived, perhaps because his mother, Mildred Manning, was of Greenwich. His birth took place in the summer or early autumn of 1592, as appears, in part, from the fact that he was elected a scholar of Winchester College at the age of ten, between July 7 and October 1, 1602. The elected scholars were supported

by the foundation, or endowment, while there were others, called "commoners," for whom payment was made. Young Whitfield was admitted to New College June 8, 1610, at the age of seventeen, and must have completed his eighteenth year after the date just mentioned. The rules of Winchester and of New College, Oxford, strictly forbade a boy's remaining at the former or entering the latter when "over eighteen," and the rules and the registers unite in fixing the time of his birth (the exact date of which is not recorded in either place) in 1592, and between June 8 and October 1.

Whitfield took the degree of B.D. at New College, and held a fellowship (fifteen were assigned to Winchester men) until 1615. "In those days," Mr. George says, "a fellowship was vacated either by marriage or by presentation to a benefice, or by succession to landed property . . . . He was not compelled to vacate by either of the first two reasons . . . . so that the reasonable inference is that he became possessed in 1615 of property, possibly at the death of his father." Be this as it may, the presumed reason for the relinquishment of the fellowship is in accordance with what we otherwise know of Whitfield's comparative wealth. Another fact of very great interest is that Mr. Whitfield, dying "at Winchester on 17 September, 1657 was buried in the Cathedral." The honor of such a burial for the builder of the Whitfield House (who probably had a benefice in Winchester under the Puritans), constitutes a second noteworthy association with this great English church. The other (later in date though earlier known to us) belongs to the monument erected to a Bishop of Winchester who died in 1761, Benjamin Hoadly. His father was the Rev. Samuel Hoadly, who was born in Guilford, and his grandfather was John Hoadly, a fellow settler of Whitfield's and, like him, one of the seven men who formed the original Guilford church, perhaps organized under Whitfield's roof.

W. G. A.

## INSCRIPTION

THIS HOUSE BUILT  
A. D. 1639  
WAS THE HOME  
OF  
REV HENRY WHITFIELD B.D.  
FIRST MINISTER  
AND  
THE LEADER OF THE FOUNDERS  
OF GUILFORD  
IN HONOR OF WHOM  
THIS TABLET IS ERECTED ON THE  
OLDEST STONE HOUSE IN NEW ENGLAND  
BY THE CONNECTICUT SOCIETY  
OF THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA  
1897



TABLET PLACED ON THE WHITFIELD HOUSE BY THE CONNECTICUT SOCIETY  
OF THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA, OCTOBER 20, 1897. DOOR  
AND WINDOW BELONG TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF 1904.



## TWO MEDICAL WORTHIES GUILFORD KNEW IN FORMER DAYS.

*By Walter R. Steiner, M.D., of Hartford, grandson of Hon. Ralph D. Smyth, and brother of Bernard, C. Steiner, Ph.D., of Baltimore, authors of two histories of Guilford.*

The two histories of Guilford, as well as the addresses at the Quarto-Millennial Celebration, and Dr. Andrews' history of Christ Episcopal Church, pretty thoroughly exhaust our knowledge of the early times in this town. There were two men, however, somewhat associated with Guilford and this old Stone House, whose medical careers have not been sufficiently emphasized. For these worthies were numbered among the most eminent physicians of their day in New England. I refer to Bryan Rossiter, a former practitioner here, and Governor John Winthrop, Jr., who at one time considered buying this house we dedicate to-day as a State museum.

The former came to this country with his father in 1630, and was made a freeman, a year later, of Dorchester, Mass. In 1639 he moved to Windsor, Conn., became town clerk there and was admitted to practise medicine in the State of Connecticut by the General Court, "being first tried and approved by Mr. Hooker, Mr. Stone and old Mr. Smith of Wethersfield, in the face of the said Court." He migrated to Guilford in 1651, purchasing Samuel Desborow's estate on Water street, and became greatly interested in the political affairs of the day, at the time when the union of the New Haven Colony with Connecticut was being considered. He came into a very large practice, as the following extract shows, which was taken from a letter he wrote to his daughter and her husband on September 24, 1669: "We have had a sore visitation again by sickness and mortality here in Guilford this summer, as the last. Our graves are multiplied and fresh earth heaps are increased. Coffins again and again have been carried out of my doors. I have taken up a lot amongst the tombs in the midst of them." It was during this "visitation" he lost his wife, his daughter and

a grandchild. I shall elsewhere refer to his treating Mrs. John Higginson, a daughter of Henry Whitfield.

Rossiter was frequently called to see cases in all parts of the State, and some of his trips to Hartford have been recorded. In 1659 the court ordered that "Mr. Bray Rosseter for and in consideration of his paines, in comeing to and attending Mr. Talcot in his sickness, is allowed five pounds, to be paid out of ye pub. Treasury." In July, 1663, he probably performed the autopsy on Rev. Samuel Stone, who was assistant pastor of the First Church of Christ in Hartford. Mather in his *Magnalia* thus refers to it: "As for Mr. Stone if it were *metaphorically* true (what they *proverbially* said) of Beza that he had no gall, the physicians that opened him after his death found it *literally* true of this worthy man." Rossiter had previously prescribed for Stone and had been paid ten pounds for it by the town of Hartford, and we also know that Davenport of New Haven had endeavored to make Stone take Winthrop's "sovereigne remedy," Rubila, "but did not find him inclinable, though he was burthened in his stomach."

But more interesting than this is the autopsy Rossiter performed in Hartford, a year earlier, to ascertain whether the child of John Kelly was bewitched. The child was a girl, aged eight years, "who was taken in the night following Sunday, March 23d, with a violent attack of something like bronchopneumonia. In her delirium she cried out against Goody Ayres as choking and afflicting her, and the last words the child spoke were to that effect." Following the superstition of those times, both her parents and the townspeople thought that her death was due to some preternatural cause. The town, accordingly, summoned a jury of six men to inquire of the cause and manner of her death. Their findings were so suspicious that on the same day, that is five days after the child's death, Dr. Rossiter performed an autopsy at the grave, and mistook his findings (now easily explainable) for something supernatural. His results are embodied in a still-existing, clearly described protocol.

Fortified then by the autopsy, John Kelly and Bethia, his wife, testify in open court on May 13, 1662, as to the alleged persecutions of their child by Goody Ayres, according to the child's testimony. They state that the child after eating some hot soup

with the wife of William Ayres, against their wishes, complained of pain in her stomach. Her father gave her some angelica root, which yielded her "present ease," but the relief was only temporary, as sometime later she died. Fearing, consequently, an indictment, Goody Ayres fled suddenly with her husband, leaving their son, aged eight, behind them, as well as all their possessions. We know nothing of their subsequent history, but we learn that the court allowed Mr. Rossiter on March 11, 1662, "twenty pounds in reference to openinge Kellies child and his paynes to visit the Dep-Governor and his paynes in visiting and administering to Mr. Talcot."

Rossiter finally moved to Killingworth (now Clinton), but soon returned here and died in 1672. There is one of the books of his library to be seen in the Trinity College library at Hartford.

John Winthrop, Jr., followed his father to this country in 1631, and was shortly thereafter made an assistant in the Massachusetts Colony. A year later he led a company of twelve to Agawam (now Ipswich), where a settlement was made. In about a year he returned to England and received a commission to be Governor of the River Connecticut for one year. On coming back to America he built a fort at Saybrook, and resided there part of that time. Then, making no effort to have the commission renewed, he returned to Ipswich, but settled again in this State in the spring of 1647, at Pequot (now New London). Eight years later he moved to New Haven. It was somewhat prior to this that John Higginson wrote to Winthrop, stating that the bearer of the letter told him Winthrop "desired to know whether my father Whitfield's house and lots was yet to be soould, I thought fitt to give you notice of it," Higginson declares, "(knowing that if God make your way plaine to come hither, it will be very acceptable to all) that it is yet in a capacity to be sold, & yet through his neglect of speaking sooner, the opportunity is allmost past, for the second day come senight my broth. Nath: & cousin Jordan are to take their journey for England." They wish consequently to dispose of "their occasions" and the house especially. If Winthrop "desired to buy it, it will be necessary," Higginson says, "to come over the beginning of next week, for I have prevayled with my brother Nathaniel to abstaine from any way of disposing of

it till Thursday, the next week." It is unfortunate that this man of science, by not purchasing the house, was lost to Guilford.

From New Haven Winthrop was called to dwell in Hartford on being elected Governor of Connecticut in 1657. He served as Governor one year, then became Deputy Governor on account of a law which prevented his re-election. The law being repealed the next year, he served continuously as Governor from 1659 until his death in 1676.

From his youth up he was devoted to scientific studies and was an omnivorous reader of books. His library was one of the most extensive in this country, and many of his books may yet be seen in the libraries of the New York Society and Yale University. Alchemy greatly interested him and among his correspondents were numbered Dr. Robert Child, Sir Kenelm Digby, George Storkey and Jonathan Brewster, all of whom had like ties. He was also much attached to astronomy and with his telescope, which was "but a tube of 3 foote & a half with a concave ey-glasse," he was able to see five satellites of Jupiter and make other celestial observations. He seemed to enjoy especially the association with scientific men. In 1661, when he went to England for a third time, he arrived not long after the Royal Society for Improving Useful Knowledge was organized. On December 11 of that year he was proposed for membership by William Brereton, afterwards Lord Brereton, and was admitted January 1, 1662. During this stay in England, he took an active part in the society's proceedings, read a number of papers on a great variety of subjects and exhibited many curious things.

He came naturally by his liking for medicine, as his father had no mean knowledge of this science. We learn, also, that his brother Henry's widow "was much employed in her surgurye and hath very good successe," and his son Wait and grandson John had both a laudable knowledge of medicine for their times. His patients came mostly from Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. They were frequently sent to him, generally at Pequot or Hartford, but at times he would come to see them in consultation with the village doctor, or otherwise, when they were too sick to be moved. Some were also treated by him by letter without personal inspection. Cotton

Mather says: "Wherever he came still the Diseased flocked about him, as if the Healing Angel of Bethesada had appeared in the place."

We know that in Guilford the families of Governor William Leete, John Higginson and, probably, John "Megs" were all under his care. In 1654 or '55 Higginson writes a most earnest letter to Winthrop at Pequot or Hartford, begging him to come and see his wife. Higginson does not state what her sickness was, but declares "the case is such as cannot be judged without ocular inspection." He calls it "a very sad affliction, she being in a very dangerous case as Mr. Rosseter (above mentioned) and all our neighbours here doe apprehend." He hopes that Winthrop's "counsell & help, together with Mr. Rosseter" may be the means of preserving her life, "if so it pleas the Lord."

Governor Leete, also, placed great confidence in Winthrop's ability and skill. At one time he writes: "My wife entreats some more of your phisick, although she feareth it to have very contrary operations on Mr. Rossiter's stomach"—showing that professional jealousy existed in those days. Leete's children were the cause of much anxiety. In 1658 Leete writes about the eye trouble of their youngest child, Peregrine, and later of his "starting, & sometimes almost strangling fitts, like convulsions, which have more frequently afflicted the infant of late than formerly." We are apt to conceive it probable, he says, to proceed from more than ordinary painful breeding teeth. His eyes seemed to be better from the use of a "glassee of eye watter," which was also used on other of the children so that "a little further recruit" of the same was desired.

Peregrine did not, however, monopolize all the family troubles, for his sister, Graciana, was a weakly, puny thing and gathered strength but very little. Winthrop's treatment seems to have caused an improvement, for shortly thereafter she began "to slide a chaire before her & walke after it, after her ffeeble manner." She caused trouble, however, in the taking of her medicine and Leete asks for directions "to make her willing & apt to take it; for though it seemes very pleasant of itselфе, yet is she grown marvailous awkward and averse from takeing it in beer. Wherefore I would entreat you to prescribe to us the varyety of wayes in which it may be given soe effectuall; wee

doubt els it may doe much lesse good, being given by force onely." Andrew's "starting fits" as well as a distemper affecting his son William's wife demand other letters to Winthrop. Leete, also, writes about a weak back, which afflicted a neighbor's child.

"Mrs. John Megs" was also a probable patient. In 1673 Joseph Eliot, Higginson's successor at Guilford, writes John Meigs a letter of introduction to Winthrop. In it he asks aid for Meigs' wife, who has "a gentle beginning of fits of flatus hypocondriacus yt stir upon grieve yet without violence for the present."

We do not know what remedies Rossiter prescribed, but some in Winthrop's pharmacopœia were most gruesome. One remedy highly prized was "my black powder against the plague, small pox, purples, all sorts of feavers; Poyson; either, by Way of Prevention or after Infection." It was made "by putting live toads into an earthen pot so as to half fill it and baking and burning them 'in the open ayre and not in an house' until they could be reduced by pounding first to a brown, and then into a black powder." We indeed hope that Winthrop was not so foolish as to employ the following remedy for malaria. It was sent him by the distinguished Sir Kenelm Digby of England, who claims to have had "infallible successe" with it: "Pare the patients nayles when the fit is coming on; and put the parings into a litle bagge of fine linon or sarsenet; and tye that about a live eele's neck in a tubbe of water. The eele will dye, and the patient will recover. And if a dog or hog eate that eele, they will also dye."

Let us cherish, then, the memory of these two men who as general practitioners and consultants employed the healing art and labored long and well for suffering humanity.\*

\* We are indebted to the late Dr. C. J. Hoadly of Hartford for having unearthed the account of Rossiter's autopsy on "Kellies child." In the preparation of this paper I have drawn largely from two former articles of mine entitled: Some Early Autopsies in The United States, and Governor John Winthrop, Jr., of Connecticut, as a Physician. They appeared in *The Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin* during the year 1903.

## ORIGINAL TRUSTEES.

JULY, 1900.

(Eight appointed by Governor Lounsbury; the first selectman of Guilford a trustee *ex-officio*.)

Rev. William G. Andrews, D.D., Guilford, *President*.

Rev. George W. Banks, Guilford.

Mrs. Godfrey Dunscombe, New Haven.

Hon. Lynde Harrison, New Haven.

James J. Merwin, Windsor.

Frederick C. Norton, Bristol.

Rev. Frederick E. Snow, Guilford, *Secretary*.

Joel T. Wildman, Guilford, *Treasurer*.

Richard C. Woodruff, Guilford, *ex-officio*.

## PRESENT TRUSTEES.

MAY, 1911.

Frederick C. Norton, Bristol, *President*.

Rev. William G. Andrews, Guilford.

Mrs. Frank W. Cheney, South Manchester.

Harry B. Dudley, Guilford, *ex-officio*.

Mrs. Godfrey Dunscombe, New Haven.

Edward C. Seward, New York and Guilford, *Sec. and Treas.*

George Dudley Seymour, New Haven.

Rev. Frederick E. Snow, Guilford.

Hon. Rollin S. Woodruff, New Haven and Guilford.













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